



CommuniQUÉ

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A new era begins

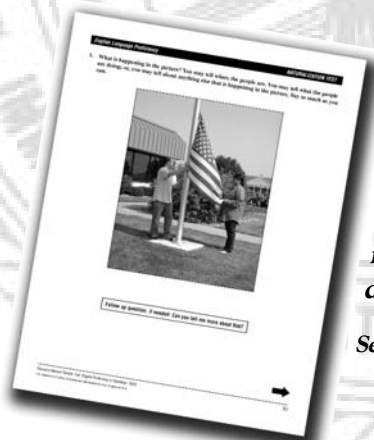
Ridge outlines border security plans during visit with employees in Miami

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Reprint from Mesquite Review detailing a Mexican-American reporter's eye-opening day with La Migra

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Pilot slated for April

INS to make naturalization test identical in each district office

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HEADQUARTERS *News*

Speaker brings spirit of Dr. King alive during Headquarters event

“He is truly an American hero. The power of his message and the depth of his commitment to the principles that guided him continue to inspire.”

—Acting Commissioner Garcia

GREENFAIR Moses III doesn't resemble Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. That doesn't mean his portrayal of the famous civil rights activist doesn't leave people thinking that the spirit of Dr. King may reside somewhere inside him.

The Headquarters Martin Luther King Jr. Day celebration on Jan. 22 featured Moses' many performances as the leader, but few in the room were prepared for what they were about to experience.

“It just reminded me of Greensboro in 1961,” said Black Affairs Program Manager Henriatta Farve who heard Dr. King speak in

person. “That area was a hot bed during that time and just listening to Mr. Moses reminded me of that time.”

Going back and forth between talking about Dr. King and impersonating him during Dr. King's famous speeches, Moses inspired the crowd in the same way that the civil rights leader did. Members of the audience gasped with delight and awe throughout his presentation.

Honoring a “brilliant man”

“He was a brilliant man. He could have been anything he wanted to be,” Moses said. “But he wanted to see if he could make a difference in the lives of so many people.”

In discussing the lessons that Dr. King left society, Moses noted that his biggest contribution might have been the way he left this world.

“Dr. King taught us how to live, and he taught us how to die,” he said. “That's the big one. He taught us to die with love in our heart.”

His moving reenactments of Dr. King's speeches earned Moses a warm and enthusiastic standing ovation.

Remembering Dr. King's contributions

Before Moses spoke, Acting Commissioner Michael Garcia noted in his opening remarks the importance and impact that Dr. King had on the American psyche and history.

“He is truly an American hero. The power of his message and the depth of his commitment to the principles that guided him continue to inspire,” Garcia said. “I think we do a good job of remembering Dr. King. Celebrating Dr. King's life is different than remembering.”



Acting Commissioner Michael Garcia (left) presents a statue of liberty to Greenfair Moses III for his riveting portrayal of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

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The musical group Redeeming Souls lift spirits with their gospel sound.

Garcia spoke of the legacy of Dr. King and the responsibility people have in furthering his message.

"Action is the highest honor we can pay to Dr. King, and it is also very demanding," Garcia said.

Remembering principles on difficult days

Garcia asked employees to remember their commitment to act according to Dr. King's guiding principles when their own principles are being severely tested.

"That is what leaders do, and that is what Dr. King did," he said. "And that is why his message has survived."

At the end of the celebration, Farve introduced Redeeming Souls, the musical entertainment for the event, who lifted everyone's spirits with their gospel sound.

"It was like church broke out," she said afterwards. "It made it a truly special day."

The experience of the day rejuvenated her, Farve said, and she believed the celebration not only honored a great man, but also helped many remember where they came from.

"Dr. King is why I am the Black Affairs Program Manager," Farve said. "This day reminds you of what we fight for, where we have come from, and where we want to go."

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Good News: INS*ide*.....

The INS *Communiqué* is published by INS Headquarters under a contract with *Casals & Associates, Inc.* of Alexandria, Va. The publication is committed to informing the employees of the Immigration and Naturalization Service about official and unofficial activities. Readers can address letters to the editor to *Communiqué* c/o Casals & Associates / 1199 North Fairfax Street, Third Floor / Alexandria, VA 22314 / attention: INS *Communiqué* Editor. Letters in electronic format may be sent to << ins@casals.com >>.

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Department of Homeland Security opens doors as secretary swears in

AS Tom Ridge was sworn in Jan. 24 at the White House as the first secretary of homeland security, some 100 key staffers of the new Department of Homeland Security opened the doors of the government's 15th Cabinet department.

"We realize that today marks one step in the process of building not only the new department, but continuing on a daily basis to better protect our fellow citizens and our way of life," said Ridge, the former governor of Pennsylvania who had been serving as the President's homeland security adviser. "We also realize we have a long way to go."

Temporary headquarters chosen

Temporarily headquartered at the U.S. Naval Security Station in northwest Washington, D.C., the department will absorb most of its component agencies March 1, and some employees will not come on board until later in the year. Ultimately, the new department will bring together 170,000 employees from 22 federal agencies, including the INS, Customs Service, Secret Service, Coast Guard, Transportation Security Administration, and Federal Emergency Management Agency.

At the swearing-in ceremony, President Bush praised Ridge as a "superb leader who has my confidence," noting Ridge earned a 94 to 0 unanimous confirmation vote from the U.S. Senate.

President praises new leader

"He's a decisive, clear-thinking executive who knows how to solve problems," the President said. "He's a person of integrity and a person of good judgment."

Ridge reiterated his commitment to "do everything I can to harness the energy and the creativity and the will and the commitment of 170,000-plus people to do everything they can every single day to accomplish the mission of homeland security, and that is to do everything we can to prevent a terrorist attack, to reduce our vulnerability, to prepare for an attack, to respond as quickly as possible, to do it to our very best ability every single day."

He said he was aware that some agencies going into the new department had been criticized.

"But I know, in the heart and mind of everybody that goes to work with me in the Office of



Photo courtesy of James Tourtelotte

Secretary Tom Ridge asks employees to look at the new Department of Homeland Security Web site, www.dhs.gov, posted just after midnight on Jan. 24.

Homeland Security, they're going to do the best they possibly can," he said.

The new department will empower employees, he said, through improving communication, sharing information, harnessing state-of-the-art technologies, consolidating work, providing more training, and creating incentives.

"The first challenge we have is just building up new capacities. And in that effort, I think we look to begin simultaneously working with the men and women who work there," he said. "You know, we are going to build a new human resource management system. We want these men and women to be empowered."

Ridge said he would continue to meet with labor representatives to "sit down and start going through the issues that concern their workers about security and pay and all those kinds of things, and so they will be involved from the very beginning."

Web site posted just after midnight

He said the new Department of Homeland Security Web site, www.dhs.gov, went up the night before and asked people to take a look at it.

"It will be an indispensable tool as we continue to build and then sustain the partnerships we need with the states and local governments, with the private sector as well as with citizens," he said. "And we expect very constructive feedback over the weeks and months ahead, and it will be one of our primary information-sharing tools that we will employ on a day-to-day basis."

Ridge outlines border security plans during visit with employees in Miami

HOMELAND Security Secretary Tom Ridge pledged Jan. 30 to uphold the rights of law-abiding international visitors while tracking down suspected terrorists through the creation of two new bureaus to protect U.S. borders and enforce immigration laws.

"This morning the President sent this border agency reorganization plan to Congress, and we intend to produce, with your help, a more robust enforcement and protection capability to secure our nation," he said. "It is a very important first step in integrating the old functions so that the new department can be even more effective."

Ridge made the announcement in front of a moored Coast Guard cutter in Miami's Biscayne Bay during his first public visit with department employees since his confirmation Jan. 24. He described plans to create a new Bureau of Customs and Border Protection to deal with people before they enter the country and a new Bureau of Immigration and Customs Enforcement to

track down potential violators once they have entered the country.

"Make no mistake, organization will matter, because from the homeland to the hometown, it will lead to outcomes—it will lead to outcomes that better protect our country," he said. "And one of our first goals for the department this year is to integrate old functions in a new way, to make us stronger and safer."

Under the plan, people entering the United States will meet with a single Homeland Security officer overseeing all matters of customs, immigration, and law enforcement, he said.

"Instead of four faces at the border, America will have one," Ridge said. "The focus here is to help legitimate goods and people enter our country swiftly and keep dangerous people and their weapons out."

Likewise, the new investigative arm, the Bureau of Immigration and Customs Enforcement, will combine interior enforcement.

"We want to make absolutely certain, to the very best of our ability, that questions of immigration status, customs issues, interdiction laws, and detention concerns receive the full attention of our officers and our criminal investigators," Ridge said.

Some 100 INS employees from the Miami District were in the audience, including Inspector Lois Hunter, who introduced Secretary Ridge.

"I think it is significant that he is making his first public speech as Secretary to an audience full of federal employees," she said. "He brought many agencies together. He said he wants to listen to us, that he wants our input and advice. And believe me, he'll get it!"

Ridge later toured the Port of Miami on a U.S. Customs boat, flanked by patrol craft from a half-dozen enforcement agencies. He then met privately with key stakeholders, elected officials, and Miami Sector and District management teams. Afterwards, he went to Miami Airport where he conducted a roundtable meeting with representatives of several department agencies and toured the airport's processing facility staffed by INS and Customs.

New plan calls for 2 border bureaus

SECRETARY Tom Ridge outlined Jan. 30 the Department of Homeland Security's plan to absorb several agencies into a Bureau of Customs and Border Protection and Bureau of Immigration and Customs Enforcement:

- *Bureau of Customs and Border Protection.* The border protection and inspection functions of INS, Customs Service (formerly Department of Treasury), and the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (formerly Department of Agriculture) will bring together employees who will focus exclusively on securing the borders and facilitating the movement of legitimate trade and travelers. Customs Commissioner Robert Bonner will head the new bureau.
- *Bureau of Immigration and Customs Enforcement.* The investigative and enforcement duties of Customs, INS, and the Federal Protective Service (formerly General Services Administration) will bring together employees who will focus exclusively on the criminal investigations and enforcement of the nation's immigration and customs laws throughout the United States, including locating and removing aliens who are in the United States illegally. Acting Commissioner Michael Garcia will head the new bureau.

The organization plan will take effect March 1, when the agencies join the new department, but Ridge said it will take months to fully integrate the agencies. The day-to-day operations will not significantly change on March 1, and he said employee locations, supervisors, salaries, and benefits will not change.

Photo courtesy of James Tourtelotte



Secretary Tom Ridge listens to the front line members of the different agencies at an informal gathering in Miami.

Photo courtesy of James Tourtelotte



Secretary Tom Ridge shakes hands with Inspector Rogelio Welch as Undersecretary Asa Hutchinson (left) and Inspector Josefina Farias look on.

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INS Headquarters site chosen for Hutchinson swearing-in ceremony

INCOMING Department of Homeland Security Undersecretary for Border and Transportation Security Asa Hutchinson chose INS Headquarters for his Jan. 29 swearing-in ceremony.

"Asa being the kind of person that he is said 'let's go someplace and let's do this with some members of our new team,'" recalled Secretary Tom Ridge before administering the oath of office to Hutchinson. "We're here today at the Headquarters of the Immigration and Naturalization Service to write a new chapter in border security."

Every agency critical to success

Ridge said Hutchinson, former Administrator of the Drug Enforcement Agency, faces a huge and important job, and every agency represented in the room is critical to his success. Besides INS, the standing-room-only ceremony also included representatives of the Customs Service, Federal Protective Service, Transportation Security Administration, and other future members of the 100,000-employee Directorate of Border and Transportation Security. The newly created Bureau of Customs and Border Protection and Bureau of Immigration and Customs Enforcement are part of that directorate.

"The Department of Homeland Security will balance strong enforcement at our borders with fair treatment of legal immigrants and visitors," Ridge said. "Asa Hutchinson is absolutely the right person to lead this effort."

As head of DEA, Hutchinson took a hard line against drug traffickers, making history when he served the first indictments of known terrorists for drug trafficking. During his tenure, the DEA also was able to target the Arellano Felix organization, Mexico's most powerful and violent drug trafficking group, an accomplishment that culminated in the arrest of its mastermind, Benjamin Arellano Felix.

"You should know that he is a very talented and very experienced lawyer," Ridge said. "He was so good at that profession that he got elected to Congress and was highly regarded on both sides of the aisle."

Hutchinson was elected three times to the House of Representatives and, while in Congress, demonstrated strong leadership in the fight against drugs. He served on the Speaker's Task Force for a Drug-Free America, a group charged with finding new approaches to reduce drug use among the



Secretary Tom Ridge (left) administers the oath of office to incoming Undersecretary for Border and Transportation Security Asa Hutchinson (right). Susan Hutchinson, Asa's wife, holds the family Bible used for the swearing-in.

nation's youth. Hutchinson also served on the House Judiciary Committee and the Select Committee on Intelligence.

Before his election to Congress in 1996, Hutchinson practiced law in Arkansas for 21 years. During that time, he was appointed by President Ronald Reagan as U.S. Attorney for Western Arkansas. At age 31, he was the youngest U.S. Attorney in the nation.

Hutchinson expresses his "full confidence"

During remarks after his swearing-in, Hutchinson said he worked very closely with many of the agencies being absorbed into the Directorate of Border and Transportation Security while he was a U.S. Attorney in the Western District of Arkansas.

"I grew in respect for everyone we worked with that is represented in this room. That respect continued through my time in Congress and it continues to this day," he said. "I have the full confidence that we will be able to do something great for America, something that is historic, something that will give America continued freedom."

Quoting President Bush's state of the union speech, he said, "We will not permit the triumph of violence in the affairs of men. Free people will set the course of history. Whenever you look at the accomplishment of those words and how you carry them out, it is dependent upon the men and women in this room, and the responsibility we have in defending the homeland. We are the ones who have to ensure freedom for the next generation of Americans."

5 press conferences kick off Life Act outreach campaign

INS conducted simultaneous press conferences—in both English and Spanish—in five locations around the country Jan. 27 to kick off a national public outreach campaign encouraging thousands of eligible individuals to file applications to adjust their status in the United States to that of permanent resident.

“INS is taking to the airwaves urging them to take action by June 4,” Acting Commissioner Michael Garcia said at the Headquarters press conference. “Our message is don’t be left out.”

The public outreach campaign aims to reach more than 200,000 long-term U.S. residents who are believed to be eligible to apply for legal status under a provision of the Legal Immigration and Family Equity Act. The deadline for filing such applications is June 4, and as of Oct. 31, 2002, only about 55,000 individuals had filed.

After the Commissioner urged potential applicants to apply, Chief of Staff Victor Cerda made the same appeal in Spanish followed by the Embassy of Mexico Minister for Migration Affairs Carlos Félix Corona. Their appeals were telecast live to the press conferences in the metropolitan areas where INS believes the majority of potential applicants reside: Los Angeles, Calif; Chicago, Ill.; Houston, Texas; and New York, N.Y. Public affairs officers in all five locations then responded to the media’s questions.

At Headquarters dignitaries from embassies of several Central American nations also were on hand to give one-on-one interviews and make appeals to the citizens of their nations. The INS sought their participation because INS research shows the majority of potential applicants are from Central America with the largest number being natives of Mexico.

The press conferences resulted in prominent coverage in the Spanish-language media around the country, bringing increased attention to the INS’ 30-second radio and television spots. They began airing in late January on local radio and television stations



The Embassy of Mexico Minister for Migration Affairs Carlos Félix Corona (left) asks potential LIFE applicants to “protect their future” in Spanish as Commissioner Michael Garcia and Chief of Staff Victor Cerda (right) look on.

in Chicago, Houston, Los Angeles, and New York as well as nationally on the Radio Unica network, Univision, and Telemundo. In addition, similar messages appear on posters and fliers being distributed in Hispanic communities in those same cities.

The LIFE Act provides eligible applicants with work authorization—and even a stay of removal or deportation proceedings or orders—while their adjustment applications are pending. It also protects them from removal and provides employment authorization for certain spouses and minor children of eligible applicants for the period of time in which they are afforded Family Unity protection. For more information, see the INS Web site at www.ins.gov.

Employee newsletter ends as INS is absorbed

WITH INS being absorbed into the Department of Homeland Security March 1, the agency’s employee newsletter will end as well. The January 2003 edition will be the final *Communiqué*.

Since January 2001, the newsletter for all INS employees has been written, edited, and designed under a contract with the firm of Casals & Associates, Inc., in Alexandria, Va.,

and published through the Headquarters Office of Public Affairs. Before that, the office produced *Communiqué* in house for more than 20 years.

The staff of *Communiqué* wishes to thank the many public affairs officers and employees around the country who contributed by-lined articles, photos, information, story ideas, and inspiration over the past two years.

INS NEWS FROM *the Field*

Attorney General, Commissioner inaugurate new SENTRI facility

THE economic strength of the border region does not need to be sacrificed for national security, Attorney General John Ashcroft noted while praising a "smart border" initiative in San Diego, Calif., that allows prescreened motorists to avoid long waits at U.S.-Mexico ports of entry.

"Dedicated commuter lanes are crucial to our efforts to enhance security while facilitating the legitimate flow of people across our international borders," he said. "Nowhere is that mandate more critical than in this region, home to the busiest land border crossing in the world."

Interest in SENTRI has grown dramatically

The Attorney General made his remarks on Jan. 14 at a ribbon-cutting ceremony for a SENTRI (Secure Electronic Network for Travelers' Rapid Inspection) enrollment office serving the nation's largest dedicated commuter lane. Since Sept. 11, interest in SENTRI has increased dramatically in

San Diego, resulting in a six- to eight-month wait for prospective SENTRI participants to complete the enrollment process, including the background check, fingerprinting, and interview. The INS expects the state-of-the-art facility at the Otay Mesa port of entry to cut in half the wait time for SENTRI pass applicants.

SENTRI allows enrolled northbound motorists to avoid the long waits at the San Ysidro and Otay Mesa ports of entry, which link San Diego to Tijuana, Mexico. Participants use a dedicated express lane where a transmitter installed in their vehicles sends identifying information to the inspector's computer. SENTRI users generally wait no more than 15 minutes at even the heaviest commuting hour.

In the San Diego-Tijuana area, some 26,000 motorists are enrolled in the SENTRI program, and they log more than 180,000 crossings in an average month.

Commuter lane increases security

"The thorough background screening SENTRI participants undergo during the enrollment process enables INS inspectors at land border crossings to focus more attention on the arriving travelers we don't know," Acting Commissioner Michael Garcia said.

The Commissioner noted that in the last two years INS inspectors at San Diego area ports of entry have intercepted more than 1,100 criminal fugitives, including a man being sought for a triple murder in Los Angeles. "This program is paying off in ways that make the community safer for all concerned," he said.

After the ceremony, the Attorney General and Commissioner toured the new facility and viewed enhancements designed to improve and expedite the enrollment process.

While in San Diego, they met with district and sector officials; took an aerial tour of the border

Attorney General John Ashcroft (middle) talks with Mexican Commissioner Magdalena Carral at a reception for SENTRI supporters.



Photo courtesy of Marie Sabrechts

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Supervisory special agent has second life as horse rancher

By Sharon Rummery

FOR Brian Poulsen, supervisory special agent at the Fresno sub-office of the San Francisco District, the day is nowhere near over when he heads for home. Poulsen and wife, Pam, run a horse ranch in Fresno, and evenings find the two of them outdoors, riding, coaching others, and doing endless upkeep for the 37 horses they own, board, or train.

Driving up between twin pastures, you see Brian astride a cantering bay gelding, weaving artfully among five or six of the young people perpetually present in the ring. Pam's nearby leaning on a fence, shouting instructions as the young riders pass. Their three enormous dogs and the smallest-possible poodle watch. The couple takes Brian's mount, Big Easy, to another ring where they patiently run him through the paces of learning how to leap over a low obstacle.

It's hard work for all three, though it seems that Pam knows the secrets to cajoling, gently requesting, commanding then firmly insisting that the reluctant horse learn new tricks. Now, she's making a clicking sound to encourage the horse, while snapping a whip against the ground. Brian gets a bit physical, doing something that looks like body checking. Finally, a bit tentatively, the horse leaps.

To the west, an orange sun slides toward the horizon. But Brian labors on, he still has to hose down the sweaty horse once the lesson ends. It's all part of the life they lead, a life that seems to be made up of equal parts of inspiration and pure exhaustion as the two maintain the business on a complex of pastures and hulking, functional structures.

"This isn't a business, this is our life," Brian exclaims.

The two bought the ranch, complete with a low-slung, rambling ranch house, in 1994. That purchase made their present business, training both horses and young equestrians, possible.

It's a business based on an economic reality. The economics of this horse ranch start with the fact that keeping racing horses is expensive. If a thoroughbred isn't winning enough money to justify spending up to \$60 a day to maintain him, then he's useless to his owner. It's just good horse sense to sell him at a reasonable price. Incredible as it may seem, some horses have come to the Poulsens for free—after all, they're no good to their owners.

But running at a dead tilt around a track is just one thing that horses can do. Pam, with all the

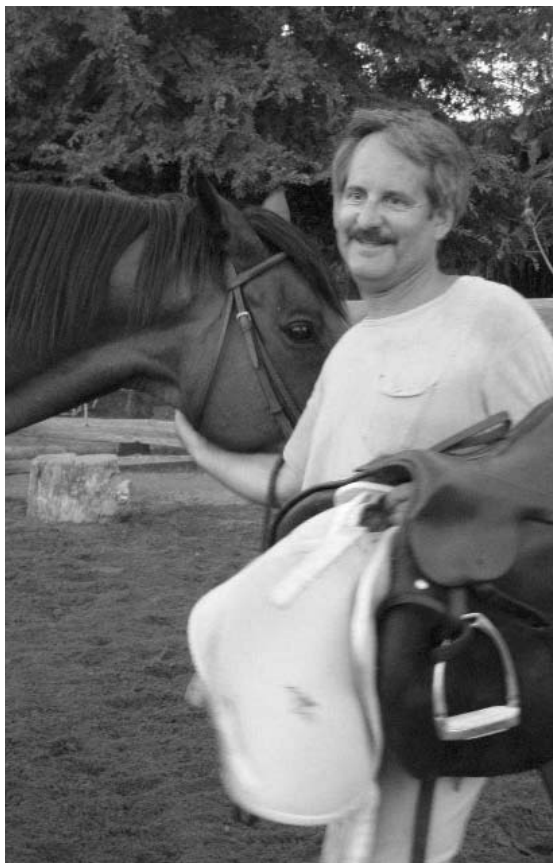


Photo courtesy of Sharon Rummery

Supervisory Special Agent Brian Poulsen prepares to ride one of the 37 horses he and his wife own, board, or train.

expertise of a lifetime around horses, knows how to teach these gentle giants. Racing thoroughbreds aren't really "broken," the way most horses are. They only know one thing—to run flat out and to the left. It's Pam's job to teach them new tricks, and to make them suitable mounts for people who want to jump horses.

Brian, who started riding horses for a living 20 years ago for the Border Patrol, knows his share of tricks. After a couple of years in San Diego, Poulsen left his San Diego Border Patrol job, but missed it, and returned to duty at Imperial Beach. After a few years at the academy, he took a job with the Border Patrol in Fresno, met Pam in 1993, and married her in 1994.

"We started out very small—we had more dogs than horses," Poulsen recalls. "In eight years, the business has increased even bigger than I wanted. It's a life that you're never finished with. Every horse is different, you never get bored."

McAllen reporter visits Border Patrol station, changes mind about *La Migra*

Reprinted with permission from the *Mesquite Review* (Vol. 6, no. 6, p. 221) in McAllen, Texas.

By Priscilla Ann Rodriguez

"The world is different now," I think to myself as I arrive in Brownsville.

A sea of white and green Border Patrol vehicles engulfs the parking lot. As I step out of my car, the wind sends a slight cool chill coursing through my body, as I remain a bit uneasy.

I move closer to the main building where the agents are located, remembering the childhood stories of this terror in green clothing, this *cucuy* called *La Migra*, who would deport unsuspecting people back to Mexico, even *Americanos*, some warned in hushed tones, as if *La Migra* might hear them and take them away.

Ancient voices, carried by the wind, whisper faintly ... brown skin. I move to cover my arms with my sweater because of the chill, and somewhere in the recesses of my psyche, I know I am trying to cover my brown skin ... just in case.

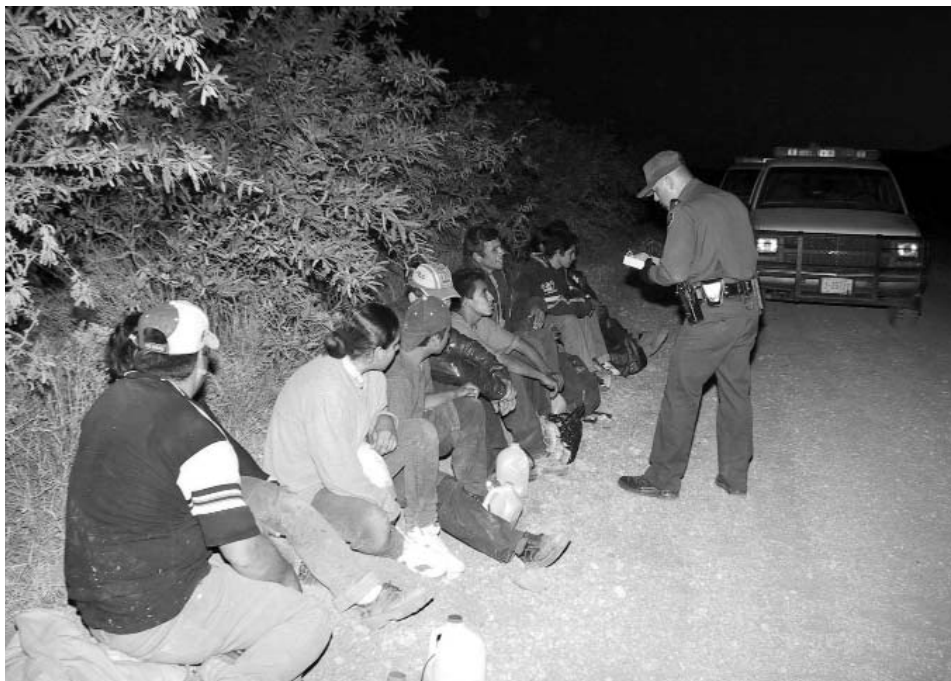
As a Mexican-American, my ties are to my country, America, yet as a person of Mexican ethnicity, I see those deported look no different than me, and I'm torn.

I understand all of that.

I also understand that we, as Americans, need to guard our borders, especially since Sept. 11, and of course the rational part of me understands the

vital importance of the Border Patrol and respects the job *La Migra* does to keep America secure.

Yet, the restlessness does not leave me, the uneasiness grows like a wild tumor in my head that is always pointing out my brown skin and my Spanish surname. I see the determination in the eyes of those deported to try again another day, with an



A Border Patrol agent interviews a group of migrants he found walking along a road near the U.S.-Mexico border.

enduring hope against hope to make it to this side. Most want only to make a better life for themselves and their family, eager to work hard in the land of opportunity.

It is these thoughts that cause me to shudder. But for the grace of God, I'm here.

On this side.

Not *en el otro lado*.

A calm, noiseless, deceptive river caresses the land that separates those of the same color skin. The Rio Grande, *El Rio Bravo*—the big river, the brave, fierce river. I laugh, as so many things in the Valley are not what they seem. This river, disguised as a harmless stream in some parts, holds powerful secrets, the dead bodies of those who tried to cross over attest to this grim fact.

I hurry my steps to enter the building, and I am greeted by agent Border Patrol, dressed in green, his skin as brown as mine, his eyes as dark as mine. He smiles.

"Let me show you around."

Many unanswered questions

I follow dutifully, biting my tongue, sensing that it is not the appropriate time

to ask the questions I've wanted to ask my whole life ... Why? How can you do this? Did you not hear those stories growing up? Were you not afraid of *La Migra*, coming to take you away from your family if your English wasn't good enough, or if you took too long to answer that question drilled into us since childhood, American citizen? Yes, yes, yes, nodding up and down, as you try to decide just what is American enough or what it means to sound American, trying to hide your confusion because according to your grandma, *Americanos* are those with white skin ... we are *Mexicanos* ... yes, we are American, but not *Americanos*.

Completely calm, Border Patrol shows me the cubicles of the agents. Lots of American flags.

As I wander around, in awe, I view the processing room, and the communications room.

"This is called the remote video surveillance camera. We have about 38 cameras along this part of the river ..."

The wall-to-wall television system reminds me that Big Brother is watching, even here along the river ...



An agent carries an undocumented migrant unable to continue her trek through the desert.

"These cameras have night vision, and we can zoom in to see the person's face if we need to ..."

I continue following Border Patrol into an unmarked white van. As we roam along the river, the natural brush providing the perfect landscape to the serene waters. We stop the vehicle to view the land. Across we can see the other side, that world that seems so distant, separated by water. A lone coyote meanders near, assessing us with his cold eyes, before running in the opposite direction.

I take a deep breath. The wind is calm now. There is something about nature and this river that causes one to become pensive.

I'm lost in my thoughts, trying to make sense of my feelings ...

Then Border Patrol starts to explain a little more to me.

"See those trash bags ... They use those as a floatation device to cross over ... They fill them with air ... See the river, lined with bags on the Americans side ..."

It seems illegal aliens are among the world's many recyclers by necessity. The black trash bags cloth the brush along the river, like death shrouds; I'm not too far off target, as it turns out, these bags are a slow death to the river's ecosystem.

I continue along with agent Border Patrol.

"See that, we have cameras, motion detectors ... and that," he points to a sign by the river, facing the Mexican side, warning of the dangers of trying to cross.

"This section of the river here, between Gateway International Bridge and the Brownsville Matamoros Bridge accounted

for about 73 percent of apprehensions ... and see that spot there ... where the river looks shallow, on one part of it you can stand, take one step and you go under ... two people drowned there last year ... and over there ... that's where a lot of the border bandit activity was taking place, before Operation Rio Grande in 1997, we had cases of robbery, assault, and rape almost every night ... these people would wait on the American side, and prey on those that just crossed the river, robbing and assaulting the illegal aliens ..."

Operation Rio Grande explained

"What is Operation Rio Grande, exactly? I mean I know I heard about it ..." My words trail off.

"Well, it increased the resources and manpower to this area. Before we were understaffed, we had really no way of controlling the river, but slowly, we are controlling our borders ... It tripled the amount of agents in this area."

I shudder, "triple?"

"I know, I know, we are known as the big bad Border Patrol."

"That doesn't bother you?"

"No, it comes with the territory."

Border Patrol turns to me, he smiles as if completely aware of my questions, "you know, I use to hear it all the time, growing up here, *La Migra*, but I am that person, and I have the same color skin ..."

He continues, almost in a whisper, "you hear about it ... but I tell you ... It is no longer the cowboy mentality, and the way I see it, I'd rather be here, knowing that I am going to treat people with the respect

they deserve, the way I'd like to be treated because you know ..." he turns to me, "but for the grace of God we both would have been born on the other side ..."

I nod, thankful that I found someone in uniform that understands the unspoken questions.

We eventually make our way back to the station, where I am shown a slide presentation. I see a recording of a night vision camera, which shows 75 to 80 people crossing the river at night.

"It is in that section where you were earlier. We had this many people trying to cross per night." My eyes widened, noticing all of the heads bobbing up and down in the water.

Noticing from my reaction that I more fully understand the importance of protecting our borders, Border Patrol explains, "This recording was taken before Operation Rio Grande. I know what you see. You see 75 to 80 people trying to cross over. Do you know what I see?"

I shake my head, "No."

"I see 75 to 80 potential deaths."

"It all makes sense at last"

It all makes sense at last.

"Of those crossing, very few will make it. Many will be swept away or drown. And those that do make it across meet with border bandits who assault them, and once they get past those, they don't stay in this area ... They want to head to New York or somewhere north for jobs, which means that they hire a coyote to take them there, which means that they will be left without

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Undocumented migrants found alive in the trunk of a car.



Agents patrolling the Rio Grande frequently rescue migrants from drowning.



The Horse Patrol patrols in rough terrain.

INS NEWS *of Note*

2 former Tyson Foods managers make plea deal days before trial

TWO former Tyson Foods managers pleaded guilty in January to conspiring to smuggle illegal immigrants from Central America into the United States to work at one of the poultry plants of the country's largest meat producer.

The guilty pleas stemmed from a two-and-a-half year INS undercover investigation, during which agents transported some 130 illegal aliens from the Mexican border to a Tyson plant in Shelbyville, Tenn.

Spencer Mabe, 50, former plant manager at the Tyson's complex in Shelbyville, Tenn., pleaded guilty to conspiracy Jan. 16, while Truley Ponder, 59, former complex manager at the same facility, pleaded guilty to conspiracy Jan. 17. Both admitted to meeting with undercover INS agents to discuss deliveries of illegal aliens to the Shelbyville plant for employment, according to court documents.

The pleas came less than three weeks before the two—along with Tyson Foods and three other current and former employees—were to face trial in U.S. District Court in Chattanooga, Tenn. Tyson Foods and the three other current and former

employees entered innocent pleas Jan. 23. Their trial is set to begin Feb. 4.

The three other defendants are Gerald Lankford, 63, North Wilkesboro, N.C., a former human resources manager; Robert Hash, 49, Greenwood, Ark., a vice president; and Keith Snyder, 42, Bella Vista, Ark., a complex manager. Another former Tyson employee, Jimmy Rowland, 36, the Shelbyville complex's former personnel manager, committed suicide in April 2001 after he was indicted.

The 36-count indictment, unsealed in December 2002, charged the company and the six managers with cultivating a "corporate culture in which the hiring of illegal alien workers ... was condoned by Tyson management because it was more important for Tyson to meet its production goals and to cut its costs to maximize Tyson profits than for the defendants to comply with immigration and other laws." The defendants also are accused of supplying illegal aliens with false identification cards and false employment eligibility cards, according to the indictment.

.....

AS part of ongoing efforts to enhance public safety and national security, INS began requiring all commercial airlines

on Jan. 1 to submit detailed passenger manifests before arriving or departing the United States

"With the addition of electronic departure data, the INS will be able to improve not only our ability to identify and apprehend national security threats and criminals but also improve our ability to provide valid overstay data," said Assistant Commissioner for Inspections Michael Cronin.

The program, part of an ongoing effort to enhance public safety and national security, was

mandated by Congress in the Enhanced Border Security and Visa Entry Reform Act of 2002.

The new law, passed in the wake of Sept. 11, requires the submission of advanced information on all temporary foreign visitors to the United States.

Passenger information that must be submitted in advance includes their complete name and date of birth, citizenship, sex, passport number and country of issuance, and information on their U.S. visas or alien registration number as well as an address in the United States.

Commercial air carriers have been required to submit similar information to the U.S. Customs Service since January 2002.

INS to begin pilot testing of standardized naturalization test

WHAT should be the “standards” in a standardized naturalization test?

That’s a question INS’ Immigration Services Division has been working with community-based organizations to grapple with as the agency works on a redesign of the English and U.S. history and government sections of the naturalization test.

“We know the community-based organizations are important stakeholders, and we need their input and support to make our project a success,” Project Manager Gerri Ratliff said. “We’re trying to make them feel a part of what we’re doing and address their concerns.”

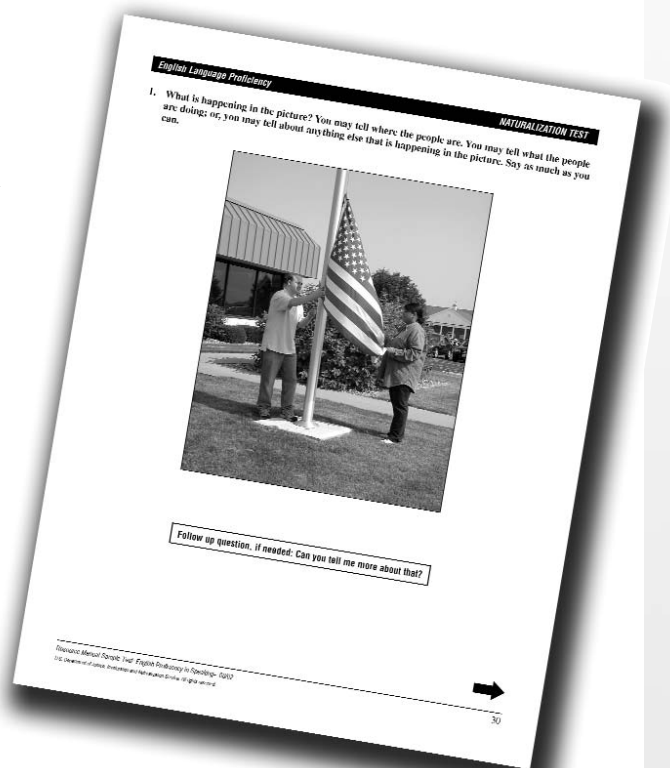
As the March 17 start date for the initial phase of pilot testing approaches, the redesign team has been meeting monthly with community-based organizations and other immigration stakeholders to discuss pilot testing procedures and concerns about the impact of a new test on applicants. The team also invited CBO representatives from around the country to respond to a survey earlier this year and incorporated the results into the test materials.

Idea to make different processes alike

“Our biggest obstacle has been the perception that if we’re going to revise the test, we must be making it harder,” Ratliff said. “We’re trying to take a process that is different in each district office and make it standardized—to make sure that an applicant gets the same process no matter what office he or she walks into.”

Up until now, INS has not had an “official” test. It is up to each of the 33 district offices, and individual INS interviewers, to determine whether an aspiring American reads, writes, and speaks enough English and knows enough about U.S. governing principles and history to qualify for naturalization. Most district offices give applicants questions from a public list of 100 sample questions, but the actual test content, whether it is written or oral, and testing methods differ widely from office to office.

The first plan to standardize the test was included in “A Blueprint for the New Naturalization Process,” a nearly year-long study by the Coopers & Lybrand consulting firm suggesting several ways to revamp the naturalization process. In September 2001, INS contracted with K.W. Tunnell Federal Services Group and its subcontractor MetriTech, a



The revised English test contains photos depicting scenes from everyday life. Applicants provide a short spoken or written description of the scenes shown.

test development company, to redesign the test’s content and develop an efficient, fair, standardized, secure, and applicant-centered testing process.

The Immigration Services Division (which will become part of the Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Services of the Department of Homeland Security on March 1) will begin pilot testing a redesigned English test on April in Newark, N.J. followed by Atlanta, Ga.; San Antonio, Texas; Sacramento, Calif.; and Los Angeles, Calif.

In the phase one of the pilot for the revised English test, naturalization applicants will provide a short spoken or written description of a scene of everyday life or answer multiple-choice questions about a short reading passage to be administered under standardized administration procedures.

“This initial pilot is looking at how applicants respond to the redesigned format of the language proficiency test and will also be used to develop scoring rules for the speaking and writing tests,” Ratliff said.

Phase two to begin in October

Starting in October, the team also intends to begin pilot testing the redesigned test, including all

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INS NEWS FROM *the Field*

Peace Bridge near Buffalo latest site for U.S.-Canada NEXUS lane

THE NEXUS identification program for low-risk travelers debuted at the Peace Bridge near Buffalo, N.Y., on Jan. 30, lauded by U.S. and Canadian government representatives as a major leap forward in border security and efficiency.

"Through partnership, we have demonstrated that greater security and greater efficiency are not mutually exclusive but can be pursued together successfully," said Deputy Commissioner Mike Becraft. "And with more than \$1 billion in goods and more than half a million people moving between the United States and Canada every day, it is imperative that we do pursue them together."



Photo courtesy of Jeff Belling

Ambassador Paul Cellucci, flanked by Deputy Commissioner Michael Becraft and Canadian Minister of National Revenue Elinor Caplan, cuts the ribbon to officially open the NEXUS lane.

Ambassador calls lane a milestone

U.S. ambassador to Canada, Paul Cellucci, described the border system as "another significant milestone in establishing a smart and secure border between the U.S. and Canada." He also described the NEXUS dedicated lane as a system that is "facilitative, yet secure."

Becraft and Cellucci made their remarks at a ribbon-cutting ceremony officially opening the Peace Bridge NEXUS lane. Under the program, NEXUS cardholders who have undergone an extensive background check are able to cross the border without the usual questioning. They flash their cards as they approach the border in the designated lane, beaming their identities onto a computer screen. The inspector visually confirms their identities and then lets the vehicle pass. All people in a vehicle using NEXUS lanes must have cards.

The pilot NEXUS lane opened at the border crossing linking Port Huron, Mich., and Sarnia, Ontario, in November 2000. A handful of other crossings in Washington and Michigan opened earlier this year and more are expected to open throughout New England in the coming months.

Several officials attend ceremony

Canadian officials, including Minister of National Revenue Elinor Caplan, Minister of Citizenship and Immigration Denis Coderre, and U.S. Customs Assistant Commissioner Jayson P. Ahern also were on hand to laud the new lane. Master of ceremonies, Buffalo District Director M. Frances Holmes, introduced each speaker at an informational press briefing inside the offices of the Peace Bridge Authority before the ribbon-cutting ceremony.

NEXUS is one of the key elements of the 30-Point Action Plan outlined in the December 2001 "Smart Border" Declaration between the two countries.



Photo courtesy of Jeff Belling

Peace Bridge Port Director Mark Hurteau checks the NEXUS identification card as the first car comes through.

Communications center provides agents with confidence, training

THE room itself may not generate the adrenaline that most Border Patrol agents experience out in the field, but make no mistake about it, the communications center in the Tucson Sector's Douglas Station is integral to unleashing surges of agents miles away to protect the border.

"The cameras are key in helping cover the more than 100 miles of distance that our station has to watch over," Law Enforcement Communications Assistant Pam Hoke said. "The cameras cover a 27-mile radius, allowing us to have some of our agents cover other areas more closely."

The center's 26 monitors serve as the brain of the station, aiding agents in locating and apprehending people attempting to come into the United States. Not only do the cameras provide agents with an extra set of eyes to apprehend undocumented migrants, they also help develop agents' confidence and provide depth and breadth to their training.

"It allows you to look at the job from a different angle," injured Border Patrol Academy trainee Jeff Olsen said. "It gives you an opportunity to learn a different side of the operations."

Olsen suffered a torn tendon in his hip while at the academy and was sent to the Douglas Station to work in the center until the injury heals. He has been a part of the communication center for more than two months, something that he sees as a valuable experience.

"It gives me knowledge about the job that other agents at the academy might not get to experience until they get out into the field," Olsen said. "I want to get back to the academy, but I find this as a great way to learn about the job."

For William Varas, experience in the field has been essential in working with the screens in the room.

"It is better to go in the field first and become familiar with the area," Agent Varas said. "That way, when you are speaking with the agents, you know what location you are trying to put them in



The communication center's 26 cameras provide agents with an extra set of eyes and also serve as a teaching tool.

and you have an understanding of where they might go."

The time spent in the field allows the monitoring agents to know and understand what they are looking at and in what direction to send the patrolling agents when they are working in the communications center.

"We may come across some footsteps and know what general direction they may be heading," Varas said. "What the cameras do is cut down the time an agent has to spend following those tracks. Now all they have to do is call the control room to find out if there is any movement in the area that those tracks are leading."

That means the agent can go directly to the people who left the tracks rather than spend time looking for them. It also can help in determining if tracks are from an undocumented migrant or one of the many animals that may be roaming in the area, Varas said.

The combination of the cameras and the agents' instincts makes for a secure area, he said.

"We have to stay in constant alert, but the cameras help in covering the area," he said. "It gives you confidence. You trust yourself more. Knowing that what you are seeing out in the field is being backed up by equipment lets you verify you are doing your job well."



The communications center provides agents injured on the job the opportunity to contribute while they are recovering.

Nearly 70 Super Bowl workers arrested for immigration violations

NEARLY 70 Super Bowl workers were arrested for various immigration violations recently after a three-month investigation designed to help ease concerns that the country's most watched sporting event could be an inviting target for terrorists.

"In the aftermath of 9/11, our priority is to examine areas that pose the highest security threat and take appropriate action," San Diego District Director Adele Fasano said.

Dubbed Operation Game Day, the investigation targeted workers in industries operating in and around San Diego's Qualcomm Stadium who have access to restricted areas. Two days before game day

on Jan. 24, Fasano announced at a press conference in San Diego that 45 security guards and 24 cab drivers had been arrested. Of these, 34 were arrested for deportable criminal convictions and several on suspicion of being in the United States illegally. None is suspected of terrorism.

"We are fully committed to using all of our investigative resources to ensure the safety of our community," she said.

Under Operation Game Day, INS special agents reviewed 11,000 immigration employment verification forms (Forms I-9) from 187 security guard companies in San Diego and Imperial

Counties. Agents also checked the licenses of more than 4,500 cab, limousine, and shuttle bus drivers working in the two counties.

Most of the security guards arrested are from Latin American countries, while several of the transportation workers are from countries known to either sponsor terrorist activities or harbor terrorists, Fasano said.

The INS received assistance from the U.S. Marshals Service; U.S. Attorney's Office; Naval Criminal Investigative Services; FBI; and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives.

New SENTRI facility

Continued from page 8

area; visited the San Ysidro port of entry; and attended night-time demonstrations of Border Patrol activities, including the Air Mobile Unit, horse patrol, and pepperball launchers.

At the end of his three-day trip, the Commissioner flew on to El Paso, Texas, where he had an opportunity to get a bird's eye view of district and sector operations through an aerial tour, briefings, and visits to the Paso Del Norte Port-of-Entry and the Service Processing Center.

El Paso Sector Chief Patrol Agent Luis Barker noted that it was the Commissioner's first official visit to the area and that the visit expanded his understanding of the enforcement and service challenges faced everyday by the men and women of INS.

"I was deeply impressed by the enthusiasm of the Commissioner while visiting El Paso, and his commitment to meet with Border Patrol agents and INS personnel in the field," he said.



San Diego District Director Adele Fasano, Attorney General John Ashcroft, Mexican Commissioner Magdalena Carral, and Acting Commissioner Michael Garcia (left to right) cut the ribbon inaugurating the new SENTRI enrollment office.

New test

Continued from page 13

three components of the language test plus U.S. history and government at several INS sites. Except for speaking, the redesigned test is designed to be administered in a group setting.

Ratliff said the plan is to test some 7,000 naturalization applicants during the initial phase of pilot testing and then 8,000-10,000 more applicants during the second phase. Applicants at pilot sites will

be asked to volunteer to participate after they complete their office's usual naturalization examination, and their participation in the pilot will not impact their application. The pilots' results will be analyzed to determine how applicants would perform on a revised test and to further refine the test sections.

The team also is creating a study guide to be nationally distributed along with the

new test materials. "If you know what is in the study guide, you will be prepared and you will pass the new test," Ratliff said.

And that's the whole idea. "Our goal is to create a uniform, fair process, using meaningful content, and then help prospective new citizens be prepared to pass the test and be equipped to more fully participate in our society," she said.

San Francisco's gym makes fitness convenient, enjoyable

ON the elliptical trainer, a special agent is going strong, making the hard work look easy. On the treadmill, an adjudications officer takes her time, earnestly trudging along. One of the stationery bikes is whirring away, thanks to the efforts of a deportation officer, who's reading the newspaper. It's lunchtime at INS San Francisco District's gym, where three rooms packed with fitness equipment of every kind make exercising—if not easy—interesting.

It all came about thanks to the non-stop lobbying of a few interested employees, including Tony Lazalde, who now serves as the fitness coordinator, collateral to his duties as a deportation officer and rangemaster. Lazalde and a small band of compatriots had been lobbying for a gym for years when Tom Schiltgen became San Francisco's District Director in late 1994. Once the new district director had settled in, the gym supporters approached him. Much to everybody's surprise, Schiltgen said "yes."

The departing Army Corps of Engineers already had a gym in the basement of the building, the perfect location. The Army's gym had locker rooms for both sexes, complete with showers. In early 1997, the organizers put out the call to all INS employees, asking for donations of fitness equipment.

But the real gym building started with the aid of the General Services Administration. They funded an expansion that nearly doubled the gym, and added another 300 square feet in 1999. San Francisco District's programs made significant contributions, thanks to support and encouragement by Charles DeMore, who followed Schiltgen as district director. Everything from free weights to a punching bag for boxing practice to elliptical cross trainers came through the doors, and is lovingly maintained by Lazalde.

"It's one of the most positive things that our managers have ever done for morale," Lazalde says. Being the fitness coordinator involves more than just locking up at night and making sure everything's in place. Lazalde writes special fitness programs for interested users, suggesting which machines to use. He also gives walk-throughs so new users can learn how machines function.

A self-confessed, long-time "running fool" in his younger days, Lazalde now nurses sore knees and a bad back, so he enjoys the less-jarring aspects of a gym workout. So do other employees, and other building residents, many of them "regulars."

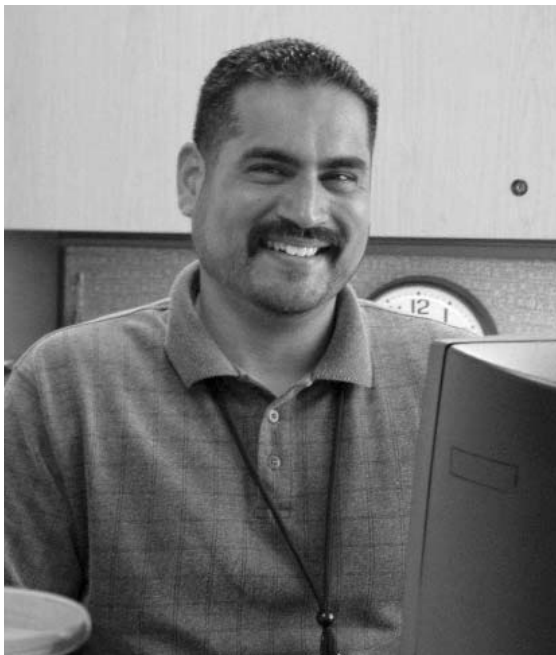


Photo courtesy of Sharon Rummeny

Tony Lazalde serves as the San Francisco District's fitness coordinator, collateral to his duties as a deportation officer and rangemaster.

Deportation Officer John Claypoole uses the gym frequently: "We have excellent facilities—better equipment than a gym where you'd pay dues. Officer Lazalde does an outstanding job maintaining it."

FOIA Supervisor Candice Louie works out as time allows. "I think the gym has helped me to become more athletic," she says. "I'm really impressed with all the equipment that they have. Once I started using it, I really liked it."

Lazalde attributes a cultural change to the new gym.

"When I started here, 28 years ago, it was nothing for employees to have beers after work," he recalls. "Now, it's 'do you want to go to the gym?'"

"The enthusiasm of the employees for this fitness facility has been our biggest reward," says DeMore, now the Assistant Commissioner for Investigations. "Tony deserves so much credit for this. He had the vision, and he never gave up. The results are right there for everyone to enjoy."

Deputy District Director Rick Eaton says the district plans to formally dedicate the fitness facility to Lazalde in February and prominently display a brass plaque bearing his name.

"When I started researching how the gym was established, I was impressed beyond description by what Tony has done—mostly on his own time—and how long he has done it," he says.

Operation Amigos provide rides, friendly ear during the holidays

NEW Year's and holiday celebrations can be some of the most exciting times of the year for many people. They also can be a dangerous or lonely time.

"We had a number of incidents occur during the holidays involving agents and it began to concern me," Border Patrol Agent Silvia Murillo of the El Paso Sector said. "We are like family, and we should care about each other."

This year there were no incidents involving El Paso agents during the holidays, thanks in part to Operation Amigos. Under the program Murillo started, volunteers are available from the Thanksgiving weekend until the end of the year, ready to pick up any agents from the El Paso Station who do not feel comfortable driving.

"Basically we have between eight and 12 agents that volunteer their time during

the holidays for any other agents who may need rides or help in any way," Murillo said. "There are a lot of celebrations going on during the holidays, and we just want to help out and make things safer for the agents."

The system works similar to a hotline. Murillo is the main dispatcher. Different volunteers are assigned to different areas, enabling fast responses to incoming calls.

"My phone rings quite a bit during the holidays," Murillo said. "Some of the agents kid around and let me know beforehand that I will be getting a call from them that night. They tell me to reserve some spots."

The three-year-old program also assists agents who may feel lonely during the holiday season.

"We sometimes just talk with them," Murillo said. "Many of these agents are

here without their families and that can be difficult."

Compounding this problem, she said, is the fact that many agents' work schedules make socializing outside of work difficult.

"The work schedule that many of us have is hard," she said. "Many times the only people that have similar schedules are other agents."

Occasionally, Operation Amigos gets requests for other types of support. One agent who was recently injured, for example, is receiving help from some of the volunteers to do work on his house.

"I just feel like we need to do our part," Murillo said. "I wanted to take an active role in helping out these people while at the same time contributing in trying to avoid mixed incidents involving off-duty support. I'm glad agents have been so willing to contribute."

McAl I en Reporter

Continued from page 11

air, food, or water, stowed away ... and I tell you ... there are some of us who have had to open a trunk in a car only to find a dead woman and her children ..."

"We are here to help"

"So you can see, we are here to help, although I know we have this reputation of the mean *La Migra*, we have to educate the public about our roles ..."

I agree, so I ask for statistics, and I get more than I bargained for.

In 1998, one year after Operation Rio Grande, there were approximately 35,000 apprehensions, in 1999, 22,000 apprehensions, in 2000, 13,000 apprehensions, in 2001, 8,000 apprehensions, in 2002 about 6,000 apprehensions.

"As you can see from this chart, we are pushing the traffic west and gaining control of the river in increments, and we are doing it in a high-profile way, so that the media can understand, we are accountable to this area of the river, to prevent menaces to society from assaulting and murdering along the river ... and many people don't know this, but we, the Border Patrol, have the best record in law enforcement on allegations of misconduct." ... "Really? Wow." It seems those childhood fears are somewhat unfounded.

"Since operation Rio Grande, we have had a 26 percent decrease in apprehensions, and a 19.3 percent decrease in the crime rate of the City of Brownsville due to the decrease in border bandit activity, and if you look at these projections, without

Operation Rio Grande, do you know where we would be right now?"

I stare at the data in front of me stunned.

"That's right," Border Patrol remarks as he reads the expression on my face, "at an estimated 600,000 apprehensions per year ..."

And with the world the way it is now, and the threat of bioterrorism, that number is horrifying, as it takes just one person to destroy many.

"So, that's what we do," Border Patrol smiles.

"Now that we have gained control of the illegal immigrant activity, we can focus on narcotic seizures and other threats to our country ..."

As Border Patrol ends his statements, my thoughts wander ... Yes, our country.

Our wonderful country of every race, color, and creed (my brown skin included), welcomes millions of legal immigrants each year, but at the same time, we must secure our borders.

The world is different now, and we are lucky that Border Patrol and his fellow agents are well equipped and well trained for the task at hand. *La Migra* may or may not have been a fair slur back in the day, but now I realize that these men and women of the modern Border Patrol are our sons and daughters on the front lines saving lives and defending America.

Special thanks to agents Tanya Bailey Garcia, David Yzagguire, and Jaime Salazar and everyone at the Border Patrol station in Brownsville for their time and the information contained in this story.

Border Patrol agents included in Veterans War Memorial of Texas

EVERY year Border Patrol agents make the ultimate sacrifice while fulfilling the oath each took to protect and defend the United States of America. So when the organizers of the Veterans War Memorial of Texas began looking for partners, the Border Patrol's McAllen Sector stepped in.

Chief Patrol Agent Jose E. Garza met with retired Army Col. Frank Plummer, the memorial's organizer, about the sector being a "guardian" or sponsor for some of its 10-by-15-foot sections. The memorial is being financed through community contributions and some 100 guardians who donate \$5,000 per section and promise to maintain their section over the years.

"The first guardian that the McAllen Sector purchased is completely finished," Assistant Chief Border Patrol Agent Chuck Roberson said. "All 91 names of the agents who have died in the line of duty nationwide are honored."

Encircled by 100 American flags, centered by an 83-foot granite obelisk, the memorial in McAllen, Texas, will

feature "streets" of brick leading to clusters of polished slabs engraved with stories—of World Wars I and II, Vietnam, Korea, and "All Wars" dating back to the American Revolution. Each guardian site consists of one flagpole with an American flag, a



Some 100 "guardians" or sponsors, including the Border Patrol's McAllen Sector, are donating about \$5,000 per section and promising to maintain their section over the years.

trapezoid-shaped granite pedestal, and about 500 pavers or bricks for names.

Agents and employees of the sector donated money to purchase the first guardian site and are now raising money to purchase a second one next to the existing memorial.

"We hope that we never have to fill it up," Roberson said.

When completed around 2006, he said, the Veterans War Memorial of Texas will be not only be a memorial to those 1.4 million who died in service to the United States, but also an educational destination and an appropriate site for sector ceremonies and events.

"It makes for a great place to not only honor agents but also remember those that have died," he said. "It will definitely get a lot of use once the site is completed."

Border security plans

Continued from page 5

During his earlier public remarks, Ridge said that the Bush administration would call for a budget of \$41.3 billion for homeland security programs for next year, a 10 percent increase over the administration's budget proposal for 2003.

Noting that many people coming to the United States will be part of the country's hope, he pledged to reduce the present INS backlog, decrease processing time, and protect the rights and civil liberties of both naturalized and prospective citizens.

"America has a very proud heritage. We have long been a nation of immigrants, with good-hearted, law abiding, productive individual citizens originating everywhere from Beijing to Belgrade,

from Nairobi to New Delhi," he said. "It is the President's intention, and that of the department's, and certainly mine, that this founding principle must and will always endure."

The Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration, whose creation was announced last fall, will ensure the country remains a welcoming nation for people who want a better way of life, he said.

"And so this morning, let us mark this historic moment, not just for what we are setting out to do, but also for what we are setting out to preserve—the pride of liberty we all feel as Americans," he said. "And again, I say to those who want to attack us and tear us apart, never, never underestimate us."

GOOD NEWS INSide



Yuma Deputy Chief Robert Roll.

Roll named new Yuma deputy chief

Robert C. Roll, a 28-year Border Patrol veteran, was named deputy chief patrol agent of the Yuma Sector. Before his current assignment, Roll was the patrol agent in charge of the Yuma Station.

"Deputy Chief Roll will be a great asset in the management of operations," Chief Patrol Agent **Michael Nicley** said. "He is experienced and possesses a wealth of knowledge regarding the unique challenges facing the Yuma Sector."

Roll joined the Border Patrol in 1975 and moved up the ranks in the Yuma and El Centro sectors. He also served for three years as an INS deportation officer in Chicago, Ill., early in his career.

Marfa agents bust smuggling operation

Agents of the Marfa Sector's Anti-Smuggling Unit dismantled the Valdez Smuggling Organization after a three-month investigation that ended with the arrest of six smugglers in El Paso, Texas.

"This investigation was the result of good law enforcement work by ASU with assistance from the

Sector Intelligence Unit and elements of the El Paso Border Patrol Sector," said Chief Patrol Agent **Simon Garza**. "The Marfa Sector will continue to use all the means at our disposal to stop the trafficking in human lives by these criminals."

An investigation was started after a group of illegal aliens was intercepted at the Marfa Sector's Sierra Blanca checkpoint. The smugglers arrested included a money handler, a scout, and vehicle drivers. At the time of the arrests, five Mexican nationals were discovered in two locations in El Paso awaiting transportation to Dallas, Texas, and other parts of the country. They had paid about \$1,000 each in smuggling fees.

Fire arms instructor finishes marathon

Susan Peebles, a firearms instructor in the Investigations and Inspections Branch of the Los Angeles District office, recently completed the Las Vegas International Marathon & Half Marathon. Last June, Peebles received a gold medal for individual and team in the biathlon in the California Police and Fire Games in Santa Ana, Calif. She also received a silver medal for her individual time and a gold in the team event for the cross-country run.



Susan Peebles runs in the Las Vegas International Marathon & Half Marathon.

Agents apprehend wanted sex offender

Border Patrol Agents from the **Carlsbad Station** working in Roswell, N.M., apprehended a 47-year-old man from Canada for overstaying his B-2 visitor visa. While processing the individual, agents discovered he was wanted in Ontario, Canada, on outstanding warrants for sexual assault and sexual interference with a child.

The suspect, identified as Robert Alexander Sobel, was processed for violating U.S. immigration laws and sent to the El Paso Processing Center pending his immigration hearing. Once his immigration case is completed, Sobel will be turned over to the proper authorities in Canada. If convicted on the criminal sexual assault charges, Canadian authorities say Sobel

can receive a maximum of 14 years in a Canadian prison. Border Patrol officials reported Sobel was living and working in Roswell at the time of his capture.



Nogales Border Patrol Explorer Post #125

Nogales Explorers visit Los Angeles

The Nogales **Border Patrol Explorer Post #125** took a trip to Los Angeles in November. The 13 explorers and four advisors visited Los Angeles International Airport and met with Port Director G. Thomas Graber and Immigration Inspector **Huldra Bailey**. Upon arriving at the airport they were given a full overview of INS and Customs operations, including viewing international visitors being inspected and admitted and demonstrations of x-ray machines and baggage scanners.

Agent celebrates proud moment

Assistant Chief Patrol Agent **Mike D. Johnson** of Border Patrol Air Operations Headquarters recently pinned wings on his son, Army Warrant Officer **Micah R. Johnson**, after he completed Flight Training at Fort Rucker, Ala. Micah is now going through Apache attack helicopter training and will be deployed to Germany with the Big Red 1 in May. Micah has been in the Army for two years and was selected for Warrant Officer Candidate School after completing basic training at Fort Benning, Ga.



Assistant Chief Patrol Agent Mike D. Johnson (left) and his wife, Darcy D. Johnson (right) congratulate their son Warrant Officer Micah R. Johnson.